Mario Savio

Sit-in Address on the Steps of Sproul Hall

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[AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED: Text version below transcribed directly from audio]

You know, I just wanna say one brief thing about something the previous speaker said. I didn't wanna spend too much time on that 'cause I don't think it's important enough. But one thing is worth considering.

He's the -- He's the nominal head of an organization supposedly representative of the undergraduates. Whereas in fact under the current director it derives -- its authority is delegated power from the Administration. It's totally unrepresentative of the graduate students and TAs.[1]

But he made the following statement (I quote): "I would ask all those who are not definitely committed to the FSM[2] cause to stay away from demonstration." Alright, now listen to this: "For all upper division students who are interested in alleviating the TA shortage problem, I would encourage you to offer your services to Department Chairmen and Advisors." That has two things: A strike breaker and a fink.

I'd like to say -- like to say one other thing about a union problem. Upstairs you may have noticed they're ready on the 2nd floor of Sproul Hall, Locals 40 and 127 of the Painters Union are painting the inside of the 2nd floor of Sproul Hall. Now, apparently that action had been planned some time in the past. I've tried to contact those unions. Unfortunately -- and [it] tears

my heart out -- they're as bureaucratized as the Administration. It's difficult to get through to anyone in authority there. Very sad. We're still -- We're still making an attempt. Those people up there have no desire to interfere with what we're doing. I would ask that they be considered and that they not be heckled in any way. And I think that -- you know -- while there's unfortunately no sense of -- no sense of solidarity at this point between unions and students, there at least need be no -- you know -- excessively hard feelings between the two groups.

Now, there are at least two ways in which sit-ins and civil disobedience and whatever -- least two major ways in which it can occur. One, when a law exists, is promulgated, which is totally unacceptable to people and they violate it again and again and again till it's rescinded, appealed. Alright, but there's another way. There's another way. Sometimes, the form of the law is such as to render impossible its effective violation -- as a method to have it repealed. Sometimes, the grievances of people are more -- extend more -- to more than just the law, extend to a whole mode of arbitrary power, a whole mode of arbitrary exercise of arbitrary power.

And that's what we have here. We have an autocracy which -- which runs this university. It's managed. We were told the following: If President Kerr actually tried to get something more liberal out of the Regents in his telephone conversation, why didn't he make some public statement to that effect? And the answer we received -- from a well-meaning liberal -- was the following: He said, "Would you ever imagine the manager of a firm making a statement publicly in opposition to his Board of Directors?" That's the answer.

Well I ask you to consider -- if this is a firm, and if the Board of Regents are the Board of Directors, and if President Kerr in fact is the manager, then I tell you something -- the faculty are a bunch of employees and we're the raw material! But we're a bunch of raw materials that don't mean to be -- have any process upon us. Don't mean to be made into any product! Don't mean -- Don't mean to end up being bought by some clients of the University, be they the government, be they industry, be they organized labor, be they anyone! We're human beings!

And that -- that brings me to the second mode of civil disobedience. There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart that you can't take part! You can't even passively take part! And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus -- and you've got to make it stop! And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it -- that unless you're free the machine will be prevented from working at all!!

That doesn't mean -- I know it will be interpreted to mean, unfortunately, by the bigots who run *The Examiner*, for example -- That doesn't mean that you have to break anything. One thousand people sitting down some place, not letting anybody by, not [letting] anything happen, can stop any machine, including this machine! And it will stop!!

We're gonna do the following -- and the greater the number of people, the safer they'll be and the more effective it will be. We're going, once again, to march up to the 2nd floor of Sproul Hall. And we're gonna conduct our lives for awhile in the 2nd floor of Sproul Hall. We'll show movies, for example. We tried to get *Un Chant d'Amour* and [they] shut them off. Unfortunately, that's tied up in the court because of a lot of squeamish moral mothers for a moral America and other people on the outside. The same people who get all their ideas out of the San Francisco *Examiner*. Sad, sad. But, Mr. Landau -- Mr. Landau has gotten us some other films.

Likewise, we'll do something -- we'll do something which hasn't occurred at this University in a good long time! We're going to have real classes up there! They're gonna be freedom schools conducted up there! We're going to have classes on [the] 1st and 14th amendments!! We're gonna spend our time learning about the things this University is afraid that we know! We're going to learn about freedom up there, and we're going to learn by doing!!

Now, we've had some good, long rallies.

[Rally organizers inform Savio that Joan Baez has arrived.]

Just one moment. We've had some good, long rallies. And I think I'm sicker of rallies than anyone else here. She's not going to be long. I'd like to introduce one last person -- one last person before we enter Sproul Hall. Yeah. And the person is Joan Baez.